



NAME: CAPTAIN SUE ARNOLD

JOB TITLE: DIRECTOR OF PHARMACY

AGENCY: INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE (IHS)

EDUCATION/DEGREES/CERTIFICATES/INSTITUTIONS:

Captain Sue Arnold received a Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy at University of Oklahoma. She is also a Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE) and is recognized as a National Clinical Pharmacy Specialist (NCPS) by the Indian Health Service. Captain Arnold is currently working on her Masters in Public Health.

CURRENT JOB DESCRIPTION:

Currently, Captain Arnold works for the Indian Health Service (IHS), at the Claremore Comprehensive Indian Health Care Facility in Claremore, Oklahoma as the Director of Pharmacy. The health care facility includes a 50-bed general medical and surgical hospital and many ambulatory care clinics. The Claremore Indian Health Care Facility serves approximately 90,000 Native Americans and is a Cherokee Nation Tribal Facility. The staff consists of 375 employees in various professional, paraprofessional and technical positions.

The Pharmacy Department has 9 different ambulatory care clinics including, anticoagulation, cardiovascular risk reduction, hypertension, chronic heart failure, hyperlipidemia, diabetes, pain management, and a metabolic syndrome clinic. The pharmacy department logs on average 1,100 patient interventions per month. The pharmacists on staff are all clinical specialists in two to three practice areas and are cross-trained to work in all of the pharmacy sites. The Claremore Comprehensive Indian Health Care Facility has an ASHP accredited residency program. Pharmacists, both staff and residents, are encouraged to participate and present at regional and national pharmacy meetings, including the American Pharmacists Association and the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists. The pharmacists on staff also precept about 60 pharmacy students per year.

Captain Arnold's responsibilities as the Director of Pharmacy include supervising 10 pharmacists and 9 pharmacy technicians, formulary review, and pharmacy budget management. In addition, Captain Arnold spends over half her time each day dispensing medications and counseling patients.

QUALIFYING SKILLS FOR CURRENT POSITION:

After graduating pharmacy school Captain Arnold worked for Parkland Hospital in Dallas, Texas. She then switched to working in chain and independent retail settings. She also did consulting for nursing homes. She later moved to Oklahoma and

purchased her own store, Cherokee Drug. This was a downtown retail pharmacy complete with a soda fountain which she owned for 10 years.

Desiring a change from the paperwork and insurance issues involved with owning her own business, Captain Arnold decided to switch directions. She entered the Public Health Service in 1992 and worked for the Cherokee Nation Tribal Facility as a staff pharmacist in the Claremore Comprehensive Indian Health Care Facility. After 5 years as a staff pharmacist, Captain Arnold was promoted to the chief pharmacist position. As chief pharmacist and pharmacy director Captain Arnold worked with her staff to develop clinical pharmacy programs at the facility. They expanded services to include disease state management programs and creatively found ways to work with their limited budget. They partnered with the University of Oklahoma to fill positions with practitioners that practiced half of the time at the University and the other half on site at the facility. Over a period of ten years, 9 different ambulatory care clinics were started and the staff size doubled. Through her leadership and tireless devotion, CAPT Arnold helped to build the Pharmacy Department into what it is today.

REASONS FOR CHOOSING THE USPHS AS A CAREER:

Captain Arnold chose the IHS and the USPHS as a career primarily to have direct patient contact. Captain Arnold had explored many different career paths in pharmacy, both before joining the USPHS and after, and has enjoyed and learned from them all. Reflecting on her feelings of job satisfaction with IHS, she admits, regardless of how long or hard my day has been, when I go home at night, I feel I was able to have an impact on patients' lives.

PREVIOUS USPHS ASSIGNMENTS:

Captain Arnold has been a Staff Pharmacist, a Chief Pharmacist, and is now Director of Pharmacy at the Claremore Comprehensive Indian Health Care Facility.

MOST REWARDING USPHS PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Captain Arnold believes her most rewarding experience has been to watch her staff and students grow professionally and develop into national leaders in the Indian Health Service. Captain Arnold also has had the opportunity to help develop innovative pharmacy programs. Six years ago, the department received a grant to teach other IHS pharmacies how to institute and manage anticoagulation clinics. Now they hold this workshop approximately three times each year and help other IHS facilities to improve their patient care services.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS/ACTIVITIES:

Captain Arnold is involved with the National Pharmacy Council for IHS and has previously served as Chair of the Council.

SPECIAL NOTES OF INTEREST:

Captain Arnold has previously been deployed to the Virgin Islands to assist with hurricane relief efforts. She also engages in public speaking on Diabetes Education.

By Monika Houstoun